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land. In 1121 Bishop Erik sailed to Vineland from Greenland, doubtless for the purpose of strengthening his countrymen in their Christian faith.

The notices given by the old Icelandic voyage-chroniclers respecting the climate, the soil and the productions of this new country are very characteristic. Nay, we have even a statement of this kind as old as the eleventh century from a writer not a Northman—Adam of Bremen; he states, on the authority of Svein Estridson, the King of Denmark, a nephew of Canute the Great, that this country got its name from the vine growing wild there. It is a remarkable coincidence in this respect that its English re-discoverers, for the same reason, name the large island which is close off the coast *Martha's Vineyard*. Spontaneously growing wheat (maize or Indian corn) was also found in this country.

In the meantime it is the total result of the nautical, geographical and astronomical evidences in the original documents, which places the situation of the countries discovered beyond all doubt. The number of days' sail between the several newly-found lands, the striking description of the coasts, especially the white sand-banks of Nova Scotia and the long beaches and downs of a peculiar appearance on Cape Cod (the *Kialarnes* and *Furdustrandir* of the Northmen) are not to be mistaken. In addition hereto we have the astronomical remark that the shortest day in Vineland was 9 hours long, which fixes the latitude of $41^{\circ} 24' 10''$, or just that of the promontories which limit the entrances to Mount Hope Bay, where Leif's booths were built, and in the district around which the old Northmen had their head establishment, which was named by them *Hop*.

The Northmen were also acquainted with American land still farther to the South, called by them *Hvitramannaland* (the land of the White Men) or *Ireland-it-mikla* (Great Ireland). The exact situation of this country is not stated; it was probably North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. In 1266 some priests at Gardar in Greenland set on foot a

voyage of discovery to the arctic regions of America. An astronomical observation proves that this took place through Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait to the latitude of Wellington Channel. The last memorandum supplied by the old Icelandic records, is a voyage from Greenland to Markland in 1347.

EXPEDITIONS AND EXPLORATIONS.

1. *Paraguay Expedition*.—The United States' exploring steamer "Argentina," Captain Page, was to leave Buenos Ayres about the 20th April, for the Rio Paraguay, accompanied by the small steamer "Alpha." The expedition-vessels will proceed, in the first instance, direct to the sources of the Paraguay, and will then ascend the Pilcomayo. The "Argentina" will go as far as her draught will permit her, when the explorers will embark in the Alpha.

2. *Expedition from St. Paul to British Columbia*.—St. Paul, Minn., is situated in lat. 45° , and long. 93° ; Fort Thompson, in lat. 51° , and long. 122° west. Between these two points is an immense and little known region, comprising the valleys of the Minnesota, the Red River of the North, the Assiniboine, Lake Winnipeg, and both branches of the Saskatchewan. Beyond the latter are the Rocky Mountains, and west of the mountains, Fraser River, (the seat of the new gold region,) flowing into the Gulf of Georgia, opposite Vancouver's Island, and within a few miles of Washington Territory.

With a view to explore this region, an expedition is now being organized, and will set out early in June from St. Paul, for a thorough and careful exploration of the region described.

The route of the expedition will be direct to the headwaters of the Red River; thence by steamboat to Pembina; thence north-westerly to the great bend of the South Saskatchewan; thence to the sources of that river in or near the Kootanais Pass of the Rocky Mountains. This pass is in about lat. 50° north. It is proposed here to explore the eastern base of the mountains, prospecting for gold in the streams, and obtaining full particulars of the climate:

and material resources of the country, as far north as Edmonton, on the north branch of the Saskatchewan. The exploring expedition will be accompanied by competent miners, in the expectation that gold deposits will be discovered. From Edmonton, the expedition will follow the express route of the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canoe Country, or the sources of Thompson River, where, close to the western base of the Rocky Mountains, the richest gold fields of British Columbia have been found. Here, if it be deemed expedient, the expedition will divide—one party going to the Pacific Ocean, and the other undertaking to explore the sources of the Columbia River and the region occupied by the Kootanais Indians. The latter party will return by Lewis and Clark's Pass, the Falls of the Missouri, and the valley of Milk River to Fort Mandan, and thence by Big Stone Lake and Fort Ridgeley to St. Paul. Both parties will return during the present season.

The expedition is fully equipped with scientific instruments, and is accompanied by several physicians. The cost is estimated at about \$300 per man. It is to be led by Messrs. Wm. H. Nobles, of St. Paul, and Geo. B. Olmstead, of Fort Ripley—the first-named in charge of the Columbia division, and the latter in charge of the Pacific division. The expedition was organized as a purely private adventure, but the City Council of St. Paul subsequently, by resolution, adopted the programme, and thus gave it somewhat of an official character.

3. *Another North-West Expedition.*—Several citizens of St. Paul have purchased the small steamer Jeannette Roberts, 112 tons burden, and of very light draft, and contemplate the unexampled task of conveying it into the waters of the Red River of the North; but between Big Stone Lake and Lake Traverse, the source of the Red River, there is a strip of low land about three-fourths of a mile wide, forming the divide between the two valleys, and which, in the spring season, is overflowed so as to permit at least of canoe navigation from one lake to the other. The depth of the water on

this portage is frequently from twenty to twenty-four inches, and this steamer, it is believed, can be got over. Once in Lake Traverse the course is free far into the British Possessions. It is the intention of the party about to attempt this exploit, to proceed at once to Pembina and Fort Garry. The expedition, it is proposed, will start on the 21st May, taking with them a year's outfit and provisions.

This expedition goes into a country mostly inhabited by Indians—the Sioux and Yankton tribes—who are friendly to the whites. If successful, it will open a lucrative trade not only with them, but also with Pembina and the Selkirk settlement. The course of the Pembina trade is at present by dog-trains, overland to St. Paul.

Eventually, another steamer will connect at the land pass between the two lakes, and form a continuous line between St. Paul and the Red River settlements. Captain Davis, now commanding one of the Prairie du Chien and St. Paul packets, has charge of the expedition, and intends to take along with him several ship carpenters to Lake Traverse; and there, converting his steamer into a saw-mill, spend the fall in preparing timber for building two other steamers, and have them ready by the spring of 1860.

4. *Survey of the St. Lawrence.*—The British Government has ordered an accurate survey of the Straits of Belleisle and the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence. The operations are to be superintended by Commander Orlebar, R.N. The work will be commenced as soon, and be continued to as late a date as the seasons will permit of. A part of the commander's force will be detached, for the purpose of re-examining and correcting the survey of the upper part of the river, made about thirty years ago. This is a most necessary and important work, more particularly as regards the lower part of the river. An accurate survey completed, and its dangers to navigation indicated by lighthouses and other nautical appliances where necessary, will do away with the evil repute which has ever attached to this

great navigable stream. It is the more necessary, since the St. Lawrence has become a common highway of trade from the teeming West to Europe; and it is equally with the Mississippi, the scene of a vast steamboating interest.

DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS.

STATISTICS OF GUANO.

GUANO or "luanu" is a Peruvian or Quichua word, signifying "manure." In commerce the name is applied to a peculiar fertilizer, found in its greatest essential strength in rainless regions, and mainly on islands and rocky promontories. It is simply the dung or excrement of sea-fowls, (and sometimes of turtles and seals,) which has been accumulating through uncouthed ages; and which on the group of Chincha, off the coast of Peru—according to Humboldt—has attained the enormous depth of 50 to 60 feet. In three hundred years, however, the deposits had not increased for more than a third to half an inch, and hence where the greatest accumulation has occurred, the process of formation must have been going on from times long anterior to either traditional or written history.

Though the true nature of this substance was not known to the civilized world before the visit of Humboldt to South America, it was well known to the subjects of the Incas; and in all the works relating to the ancient agriculture of the Peruvians, its value as a fertilizer is spoken of. The early navigators were also cognizant of the guano islands, and had seen cargoes of this deposit conveyed from the islands to the adjacent mainland, and witnessed its effects in stimulating the growth of crops.

On his return from South America in 1806, Humboldt transmitted samples of this substance to the chemists Fourcroy and Vauquelin of Paris. Their elaborate analysis, published in the "*Annales de Chimie*," (vol. 56,) introduced it fairly to the scientific world, and caused its real importance to be fully recognized. In 1810 Gen. Beatson, then on the Island of St. Helena, at the suggestion of Sir Joseph Banks, made an elaborate series of experiments with

guano on the potato, which were interesting alike from their novelty and from their useful results. But no practical application was made of this substance either in Europe or the United States until 1824, in which year the late Mr. Skinner, then editor of the *American Farmer*, received two barrels of it at Baltimore. This first importation into this country was distributed in small parcels for experiment; and one of the recipients, ex-Gov. Lloyd of Maryland, pronounced it to be "the most powerful manure he had ever seen applied to Indian corn."

Years elapsed, and no further means were taken to bring it into use. True, that in the meantime both Europe and North America had received samples from Peru, but only in such quantities as to constitute them rather matters of curiosity than utilitarian in purpose. In 1840, twenty barrels were received in England. But notwithstanding the astonishing results from its application to the soil, the fear that the enormous crops realized under its stimulus might exhaust the land of its productive elements, deterred the great body of the farmers from availing themselves of so valuable a fertilizer. Repeated experiments, however, at length convinced the most sceptical of the error of this prejudice, and at the same time that the new commodity was the safest, cheapest, and most potent of known manures. Its consumption now became general, and the guano trade expanded rapidly into a vast commercial and industrial interest.

The imports into the United Kingdom from the commencement of the trade to the end of the year 1857, amounted to 2,373,308 tons, and year by year as follows:

	Tons		Tons		Tons
1841....	2,881	1847....	82,392	1853....	123,166
1842....	20,398	1848....	71,414	1854....	235,111
1843....	3,002	1849....	83,438	1855....	305,061
1844....	104,251	1850....	116,925	1856....	191,501
1845....	283,300	1851....	243,014	1857....	288,362
1846....	89,203	1852....	129,889		(2,373,506 tons.)

These figures, it must be understood, include also the quantities re-exported, which must have been to a considerable amount—chiefly to the continent of Europe. The principal sources from which this supply was procured, are noted